1	2	3	4
East Central	—	—	13
North Western	—	—	06
East Coast	—	—	—
South Western	—	—	—
West Central	—	—	—
North Central	—	—	—
South East Central	—	—	—
Metropolitan Transport Project	—	—	—
Konkan Railway	09	01	02
TOTAL	473	414	351

* Figures are provisional.

(b) to (d) During the period, Justice Saghir Ahmed Commission has been constituted on 13.2.2001 to inquire into serious train accident involving the collision between 3005 Up Howrah-Amritsar Mail and derailed wagons of Foodgrain Special on 2.12.2000. The report is, however, awaited. However, 87 cases of accidents during the period are inquired into by the Commissioners of Railway Safety (CRS).

Recommendations received from the CRS are examined in the Ministry of Railways in regard to their feasibility and practicality, financial implications and their overall impact on Railway operations, and decision on their acceptance/non-acceptance is conveyed to the Commission of Railway Safety thereafter. The examination/ implementation of various recommendations of the CRS is a continuous ongoing process.

Approval for GM Potato

1462. SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the statement of Dr. Manju Sharma, Head of Department of Biotechnology

broadcasting by BBC that Genetically Modified (GM) potato is expected to be approved within the next six months; and

(b) if so, whether the health environment and safety aspects of GM potato have been evaluated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) Yes, Sir. Recently, the Secretary, Department of Biotechnology in an interview to the British Broadcasting Corporation while explaining the excellent indigenous research done in India on potato, expressed that it is expected to complete the evaluation studies of GM potato developed by National Centre for Plant Genome Research, New Delhi, within the next six months. The data would then be put up for the consideration and approval by the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests. In this GM Potato, the gene from edible seeds of Amaranth has been transferred to another edible plant - potato.

(b) The contained open field trials of GM Potato (tuber crop) have been conducted in close collaboration with Central Potato Research Institute, Simla of Indian Council of Agricultural Research, with the permission of the Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation (RCGM), Govt. of India. The studies related to health and safety aspects completed according to the safety protocols approved by the Government showed encouraging results. Accordingly the data for further evaluation are being compiled and would be put up to the GEAC of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, the clearing authority, at an early date.

Promoting S&T through NGOs in Assam

1463. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have supported NGOs in Assam financially to promote science & technology in the State;

(b) if so, which are the beneficiaries;